

Message Text

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SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION: THE HORN OF AFRICA: A DANGEROUS STRUGGLE
FOR INFLUENCE.

1. "OBSERVERS WONDER WHETHER THE INCREASING SOVIET SUPPORT TO ETHIOPIA IN ITS BID TO RECAPTURE THE OGADEN REGION WILL TRANSFORM THE CONFLICT IN THE HORN OF AFRICA INTO A DANGEROUS STRUGGLE FOR INFLUENCE BETWEEN THE WARSAW PACT COUNTRIES AND THE WEST", WRITES INTERNATIONAL POLITICAL EDITOR KITAMBALA KULUBITSH OF KINSHASA MORNING DAILY DALONGO JANUARY 25, IN A FRONT PAGE EDITORIAL. "ACCUSING THE SOVIET UNION AND CUBA OF PREPARING TO ATTACK THE OGADEN PROVINCE AND TO INVADE HIS COUNTRY AND OTHER UNNAMED NEIGHBORING COUNTRIES", NOTES THE EDITOR, "PRESIDENT SIAD BARRE HAS AGAIN CALLED FOR MASSIVE WESTERN MILITARY HELP TO DEFEND SOMALIA'S TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY". HE SAYS MR. BARRE HAS ASSURED THE WEST THAT THE ARMS AND MILITARY PERSONNEL HE IS SEEKING WILL BE USED ONLY IN DEFENDING HIS COUNTRY'S BORDERS, NOT IN THE OGADEN WAR.

2. EDITOR KITAMBALA INDICATES THAT THE SOMALI REQUEST FOR
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MILITARY HELP WAS DISCUSSED DURING CONSULTATIONS BETWEEN THE U.S., WEST GERMANY, BRITAIN, FRANCE AND ITALY; AT THE SAME TIME, SAUDI ARABIA AND IRAN ANNOUNCED THAT THEY WILL NOT STAND IDLY BY AND WATCH A FOREIGN POWER INVADE SOMALIA. EDITORIAL CONTINUES "REPROTS FROM AMERICAN SOURCES INDICATED CUBA'S DEFENSE MINISTER WAS IN ETHIOPIA AND THAT A CUBAN ARTILLERY BATTALION HAD JUST ARRIVED THERE."

3. "SOVIET NEWS AGENCY TASS MAY CALL SOMALIA'S ACCUSATION A PURE FABRICATION", EDITOR KITAMBALA ARGUES, "BUT THE NUMEROUS PRESS DISPATCHES THAT HAVE GOTTEN AROUND SHOW THAT THE HORN OF AFRICA IS, ONCE MORE, PROVIDING THE WEST WITH AN OPPORTUNITY TO ZNGAGE ITSELF IN AN UNPRECEDENTED STRUGGLE FOR INFLUENCE IN THIS PART OF THE CONTINENT." THE EDITOR WONDERS WHAT CAN BE DONE TO SAVE AFRICA FROM THIS THREAT OF DIVISION. HE SUGGESTS AN END TO THE FIGHTING AND THE START OF DIPLOMATIC EFFORTS AIMED AT NEGOTIATIONS. THE EDITOR STATES THAT NATO MEMBER NATIONS AND MODERATE AFRICAN COUNTRIES SHARE THE FEAR THAT THE PRESENCE OF CUBAN MILITARY ADVISERS IN ETHIOPIA MAY FURTHER SOVIET STRATEGIC INTERESTS IN THE REGION. WARSAW PACT COUNTRIES FEAR JUST THE OPPOSITE, HE SAYS.

4. "IN ANY CASE", EDITOR KITAMBALA CONTINUES, "ONE THING IS CERTAIN: BECAUSE OF THE PRESSURE PUT ON THE CARTER ADMINISTRATION, IT SEEMS DIFFICULT FOR THE U.S. TO REMAIN NEUTRAL, AS IT HAS BEEN SINCE THE BEGINNING OF THE CONFLICT." HE SUPPORTS THIS POINT BY INDICATING THAT PRESIDENT CARTER LAST WEEK SENT A SEVERE WARNING TO THE SOVIET UNION ABOUT THE SITUATION.

5. THE EDITORIAL CONCLUDES: "AS ONE CAN SEE, THE HORN OF AFRICA HAS BECOME A SERIOUS CAUSE OF DISAGREEMENT BETWEEN THE EAST AND WEST, AND ONCE AGAIN, THE OAU HAS SHOWN NO REACTION TO THE DANGEROUS STRUGGLE FOR INFLUENCE NOW GOING ON IN AFRICA.
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